

GUISASELGABS

State Rules for Special Education IX.F.2





Utah State Office of Education

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I. Introduction

- a. State Rules for Special Education IX.F.1 state the Local Education Agency (LEA) "will oversee the caseload of each special educator (including psychologists, social workers, speech/language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, adaptive P.E. specialists, and any other related servers) to ensure that a Free Appropriate Public Education is available to all eligible students with disabilities."
- The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines to LEAs and/or representatives for determining the caseloads of licensed special educators.

II. Definitions

- a. Special educator licensed teacher, psychologist, social worker, speechlanguage pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, adaptive P.E. specialist, or any other related server.
- b. Related server a special educator who provides services required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education.
- c. Case manager the special educator who is responsible for a student's file and coordinating the services for that student.
- d. Caseload the number of Individual Education Programs (IEPs) for which the case manager is responsible. Special educators may often serve students in addition to the students whose files they manage.
- e. Workload In addition to the caseload responsibilities, workload could include items listed under "Considerations" in the guidelines, including but not limited to a special educator's responsibilities, duties, other assignments, the impact of parent involvement, providing services to a student whose file is held by another educator or provider, training and supervision of support staff and/or peer tutors, etc.
- f. Itinerant a special educator who provides services to students in a variety of settings and/or schools.

- g. Transition services a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that is designed to be a results-oriented process focused on improving the academic achievement and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-secondary activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, independent living, and community participation.
- h. FAPE Free Appropriate Public Education. Special education and related services that:
 - i. Are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge.
 - ii. Meet the standards of the USOE and Part B of the IDEA.
 - iii. Include preschool, elementary school, and secondary school education in Utah.
 - iv. Are provided in conformity with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that meets the requirements of Part B of the IDEA and the State Special Education Rules.
- i. Service models (included in these guidelines):
 - Consultation a service model where a special educator provides guidance to and support for other professionals who are educating students with disabilities, rather than providing direct service to the students.
 - ii. Co-teaching a service model where a special education teacher, in collaboration with a general education teacher, provides instruction to students with and without disabilities.
 - iii. Pullout a service delivery model where students are taken out of their general education classrooms to a separate location within a school building to receive their specially designed instruction.
 - iv. Self-contained a service model in which students receive specially designed instruction for more than one half of their school day.

III. Responsibilities

a. Utah State Office of Education – oversees each LEA in providing FAPE to each eligible student with disabilities.

- LEA ensures that each eligible student with disabilities has adequate staffing educational services to ensure a Free Appropriate Public Education.
- c. IEP Team determines the individual educational service needs of each eligible student with disabilities to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education.

IV. Considerations

The caseload of a special education teacher and related service provider should be determined by consideration of the following factors:

- a. Severity and type of disability
 - i. Medical considerations
 - ii. Adaptive need/self-help level of the students
 - iii. Behavior, academic and/or communication considerations
- b. Type of service
 - i. Itinerant
 - ii. Pullout
 - iii. Co-teaching
 - iv. Special class
 - v. Transition services
 - vi. Consultant
 - vii. Special schools
 - viii. Home/hospital
- c. Amount of service
 - i. Required time for services
 - ii. Number/variety/spectrum of services
- d. Age of student (independence level of the student and the workload of the teacher at the various levels)
 - i. Early childhood/pre-kindergarten
 - ii. Elementary school
 - iii. Middle/junior high school
 - iv. High school
 - v. Post-high school

e. Teacher

- Licensed special educator vs. special educator on letter of authorization
- ii. Experience of the special educator
- iii. Area of licensure (mild moderate, severe, related servers)
- iv. Paraeducator
 - 1. Training
 - 2. Experience
 - 3. Level of education
 - 4. Highly qualified/parapro test, LEA HQ tests
 - 5. Full-time vs. part-time

f. Location of services

- i. Consultation vs. direct services
- ii. Special educator working in one school vs. multiple schools
- iii. Co-teaching vs. pullout services
- iv. Other service delivery models
- v. Size of LEA (geographical travel distance for special educator traveling to more than one school per day)

g. Additional Support Services

- i. Number of paraeducators
- ii. Related servers providing support
- iii. Number of personnel a special educator supervises
- i. Other teacher assignments (i.e., committees, school or LEA teams, extra duties)

V. Caseload Ranges

- a. Caseload size range Special educators may serve students other than students for which they are the case manager (e.g., a speech-language pathologist may have a caseload of 25 files; however, he/she might provide services to a total of 60 students).
- b. Recommended ranges include:

(These ranges are not a minimum or maximum, but a starting point for reviewing the previously stated considerations in determining caseloads.)

- i. Self-contained classroom teacher: 10-15
- ii. Resource teacher: 25-35
- iii. Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP): 50-60 SLP caseload may have a combination of files managed and other students served.

- iv. Adaptive physical education (APE) teacher: 50-60 APE caseload may have a combination of files managed and other students served.
- v. Teacher of the visually impaired/teacher of the hearing impaired determined individually through considerations discussed in Section IV above.
- vi. Occupational therapist/physical therapist determined individually through consideration factors discussed in Section V above.
- c. Paraeducator/teacher assistants were not included when determining the caseload range; however, they should be considered when determining the caseload of each special educator.
- d. Additional unique circumstances for the special educator or student should be considered.
- e. In considering the caseload of each special educator, the primary consideration is to ensure that each student is receiving FAPE.